

**POLICY OF THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
ON THE
GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELING
OF CHEMICALS (GHS)**

The GHS is a voluntary system for the classification and labeling of hazardous chemicals resulting from an effort by the U.S. and a number of European countries to promote common criteria for classifying chemicals according to their health, physical and environmental hazards, and to develop compatible labeling, material safety data sheets for workers, and other information based on the resulting classifications. Underlying this international effort is the belief that harmonization of chemical classification and labeling will promote regulatory efficiency and facilitate trade without lowering the level of health and environmental protection afforded by current national laws and regulations.

Within the United States, key federal agencies with responsibility for regulatory and international affairs formed an interagency committee coordinated by the Department of State to address implementation of GHS. Participating agencies include the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation (DOT), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Department of Agriculture, and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

As it moves forward with its role in implementation of the GHS, the Commission will adhere to the mandates for risk based decision making of the Consumer Product Safety Act, Federal Hazardous Substances Act, Flammable Fabrics Act, and Poison Prevention Packaging Act. In particular, with respect to the labeling of chronic health hazards in the consumer product setting, the Commission intends to follow the risk based labeling option specified under Annex 5 of the GHS.

With the risk based decision making approach as its compass, it is expected that the CPSC staff assessment of GHS implementation issues currently underway will identify questions that will require issuing guidance, revising existing regulations, and/or in some instances, seeking statutory revision. As the Commission addresses the recommendations resulting from the staff assessment it will also seek input on those aspects of GHS implementation that are of significant priority to stakeholders, including consumers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers of consumer products.